



**REGIONAL PROJECT ON IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LABOUR MARKET
STATISTICS AND STRENGTHENING THE MANAGEMENT OF LABOUR
MARKET INFORMATION (LMI) AND POVERTY MONITORING SYSTEMS IN
AFRICA**

**REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE REGIONAL PROJECT STEERING
COMMITTEE
YAOUNDE – CAMEROON 12 – 13 JANUARY 2005**

January 2005

INTRODUCTION

The third meeting of Regional Project Steering Committee was held on 12 and 13 January 2005 in Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon. The meeting was chaired by Mr Camille MOUTE à BIDIAS, Director General, National Employment Fund (Cameroon). Representatives of all beneficiary countries (Cameroon, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda, Zambia) participated in the meeting. Were also present, a Representative of the ILO Sub-regional Office for Africa and AFRISTAT, the Regional Project Unit. The list of participants is attached herewith as Annex 1.

The adopted agenda was as follows:

1. Opening session. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Activities report for the period August- December 2004
3. Work programme for the year 2005.
4. Budget for the year 2005
5. Venue and dates of the next RPSC meeting
6. Review of conclusions and recommendations.
7. Any other matters.
8. Closing session.

Some participants claimed that they did not receive the July 2004 session report. Therefore, before going further in the agenda, the Chairman made a summary of the previous report and reminded the main recommendations that were made.

In order to ensure the continuity in the RPSC meetings, the Committee decided that, as from the present session:

1. The agenda should include the examination and adoption of the report of the previous session.
2. Conclusions and recommendations should be examined before the closing session.
3. The meeting report will be circulated to RPSC members for observations and approval before being finalised and signed by the chairman of the RPSC.

EXAMINATION OF AUGUST - DECEMBER 2004 ACTIVITY REPORTS

Participants took the floor in turns to present their activity reports that followed a specific format designed by the Regional Project Unit.

These reports indicate that all the country project units (CPU) were set-up and launched their activities as advised by the second RPSC meeting of July 2004.

Nevertheless, the Committee took note of difficulties encountered by the Regional Project Unit for the disbursement of funds that caused some delays in transferring funds to CPUs.

On the other hand, because of difficulties encountered by CPUs, consecutive to the not mastering of equipment purchasing rules and regulations, and the delay in the arrival of funds, some activities that were programmed could not be undertaken. Activities reports are included in Annex 2.

The RPSC members were pleased that, despite various difficulties encountered, several activities were implemented.

The issue of use of international concepts and definitions was discussed. It was admitted that, because of their universality, some concepts and definitions could not be used as such and may need to be adapted to local situation. In order to ensure comparability among indicators from various countries, it is advisable to use both international and national concepts and definitions simultaneously. However, national concepts should be defined in the way that it would be possible to shift from it to the international concept.

EXAMINATION OF 2005 WORK PROGRAMMES

Participants took the floor in turns to present their work programmes that followed a specific format designed by the Regional Project Unit. These programmes integrated activities that were not achieved in 2004 and were rescheduled.

The Committee emphasized the role of staff training for capacity building. The RPU informed the meeting that training workshops on building up a labour market information system, the contents of which are given below, were planned for 2005. The first workshop will be held in March 2005. The meeting was informed that harmonization of concepts and definitions was one of the major issues of this forthcoming workshop. Participants urged the RPU to keep this period and proposed that, should project budget allow it, three (3) officers be trained per country.

REVIEW OF 2005 BUDGETS

CPUs proposed 2005 budgets, that followed a specific format designed by the Regional Project Unit, were presented in turns. As for the work programmes, they integrated funds allocated in 2004 for activities that were rescheduled.

The Committee noted with satisfaction the consistency between proposed budgets and work programmes.

The RPSC is concerned with the fact that the continuous drop of the dollar exchange rate is eating away funds available for the implementation of activities. Therefore, the Committee renews his wish, expressed during its second session, to see the project review be organised as soon as possible for reassessing the current costs.

The RPU was instructed to include the preparation for this review in its work programme.

The Chairman then called on CPUs to approach the RPU for arbitration and finalisation of budgets.

The Committee exhorted members to do all the necessary efforts to implement their work programmes despite funds limitations.

Summaries of 2005 work programmes and budgets are presented below, while detailed ones are included in Annex 3.

BUDGET 2005 OF THE REGIONAL PROJECT UNIT

| BUDGET ITEMS | BUDGET 2005 |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| PROJECT PERSONNEL | |
| Regional Project Manager | 61125 |
| Expert transport | 0 |
| Finance assistant | 16380 |
| National Consultants | 20000 |
| TOTAL I | 97505 |
| INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS | |
| Functioning of the RPU | 15750 |
| Project monitoring | 40000 |
| Equipment for RPU | 0 |
| Expert recruitment | 0 |
| Spacing Furniture | 0 |
| RPSC Meetings | 40000 |
| TOTAL II | 95750 |
| REGIONAL ACTIVITIES | |
| Networking | 10000 |
| Clearing house | 10000 |
| Training | 60000 |
| Regional Report | 15000 |
| TOTAL III | 95000 |
| | |
| TOTAL GENERAL | 288255 |

The present budget takes into account following elements included in the donation agreement, on one hand, and the meeting conclusion on number of officers to be trained per country, on the other hand.

- The need for the Regional Expert and the Financial assistant to visit each of the participating country at least twice and once, respectively, a year for backstopping.
- The organisation of at least two sessions of the RPSC a year.
- The participation of at least three officers per country to the various regional training course/workshop on LMIS development.

COUNTRY PROJECT UNITS 2005 BUDGETS

| SECTIONS | CAMEROON | MALI | NIGERIA | UGANDA | ZAMBIA | TOTAL |
|--|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| I – PERSONNEL | | | | | | |
| National consultants | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| SUB-TOTAL I PERSONNEL | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| II - DEVELOPMENT LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM AND POVERTY MONITORING | | | | | | |
| Advocacy | 6000 | 0 | 0 | 12902 | 0 | 18902 |
| Equipment for CPU | 35000 | 42000 | 43000 | 26436 | 35000 | 181436 |
| Equipment for other stakeholders | 0 | 0 | 0 | 12000 | 20000 | 32000 |
| CPU capacity building (Study tours) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7830 | 0 | 7830 |
| Training | 8000 | 4900 | 10550 | 25093 | 7000 | 55543 |
| LMIS strengthening, LMI and poverty monitoring data collection, analysis and dissemination | 94000 | 67600 | 70000 | 63405 | 107100 | 402105 |
| SUB-TOTAL II DEVELOPMENT LABOR MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM AND POVERTY MONITORING | 143000 | 114500 | 123550 | 147666 | 169100 | 697816 |
| III – COORDINATION | | | | | | |
| Coordination of data production activities | 4000 | 7500 | National Input | 13176 | National Input | 24676 |
| SUB-TOTAL III COORDINATION | 4000 | 7500 | 0 | 13176 | 0 | 24676 |
| IV – FUNCTIONING | | | | | | |
| Office running | 3000 | 4000 | 6000 | 16096 | National | 29096 |
| SUB-TOTAL IV FUNCTIONING | 3000 | 4000 | 6000 | 16096 | 0 | 29096 |
| TOTAL GENERAL | 150000 | 126000 | 129550 | 176938 | 169100 | 751588 |

CONSOLIDATED 2005 BUDGET FOR THE PROJECT

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Project Personnel | | | | | | |
| Regional Project Manager | 61125 | | | | | |
| Expert transport | 0 | | | | | |
| Finance assistant | 16380 | | | | | |
| National Consultants | 20000 | | | | | |
| Total I | 97505 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Institutional mechanisms | | | | | | |
| RPU | | | | | | |
| Functioning of the RPU | 15750 | | | | | |
| Project monitoring | 40000 | | | | | |
| Equipment for RPU | 0 | | | | | |
| Expert recruitment | 0 | | | | | |
| Spacing Furniture | 0 | | | | | |
| Sub-Total | 55750 | | | | | |
| RPSC | | | | | | |
| Meetings | 40000 | | | | | |
| Sub-Total | 40000 | | | | | |
| Total II | 95750 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| National Activity | | Cameroun | Mali | Nigeria | Uganda | Zambia |
| LMIS Development | 453007 | 100000 | 67600 | 70000 | 88307 | 127100 |
| Employment and poverty systems | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Trainings | 55543 | 8000 | 4900 | 10550 | 25093 | 7000 |
| Coordination | 24676 | 4000 | 7500 | 0 | 13176 | 0 |
| Sub-Total | 533226 | 112000 | 80000 | 80550 | 126576 | 134100 |
| CPU | | | | | | |
| Improving capacity/skill of the CPU | 7830 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7830 | 0 |
| Functioning | 29096 | 3000 | 4000 | 6000 | 16096 | 0 |
| Equipment for CPU | 181436 | 35000 | 42000 | 43000 | 26436 | 35000 |
| Spacing Furniture | 0 | | | | | |
| Sub-Total | 218362 | 38000 | 46000 | 49000 | 50362 | 35000 |
| Total III | 751588 | 150000 | 126000 | 129550 | 176938 | 169100 |
| | | | | | | |
| Regional Activity | | | | | | |
| Networking | 10000 | | | | | |
| Clearinghouse | 10000 | | | | | |
| Trainings | 60000 | | | | | |
| Regional report | 15000 | | | | | |
| Total IV | 95000 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Total | 1039843 | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous (4%) | 41900 | | | | | |
| Grand Total | 1081743 | | | | | |

PLACE AND DATES OF THE NEXT RPSC MEETING

The Committee decided to hold its next meeting in the Republic of Zambia in June/July 2005. The exact dates will be communicated in due time after consultation with various concerned parties.

OTHER ISSUES

Two issues were included in this agenda item.

The first issue related to ACBF participation in RPSC meetings. Committee members regretted the absence of a representative of ACBF in the last two meetings of the RPSC and express the wish that a representative of ACBF should attend the next meetings.

The second issue was the problem of languages to be used for RPSC meeting documents. It was accepted that, oral and written communications between CPUs and RPU are made in the country working language. Meanwhile, due to translation cost, the RPU rejected the fact that country documents be prepared in two versions. Countries will use their own working language.

REVIEW OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee reviewed the list of conclusions and recommendations included hereunder.

Recommendation N° 1

The Committee noted with satisfaction that certain country project units have approached other development partners in their countries and obtained additional resources indispensable for the sound implementation of project activities at country level.

The Committee encourages such units to pursue their country-level resource mobilisation efforts and recommends that those units which have not yet done so should embark on this path.

Recommendation N° 2

Considering the importance of certain equipment in the sound implementation of project activities, in particular, vehicles, and taking account of the fact that the grant agreement does not provide any clear indications as to the equipment which may be procured within the framework of the project,

The Committee recommends that country units should be allowed the flexibility to determine which equipment are indispensable for them.

Recommendation N° 3

The Committee, pursuant to the regulations in force which call for the holding of a mid-term project review or for the holding of a project review when the project has used up half of the budget,

Recommends that the project review be organised in the second half of 2005 and calls on ACBF to associate other donors, in particular, ILO, UNDP, World Bank, ADB, European Union, DFID and GTZ in mobilising the additional resources.

The Committee further recommends that this review should be organised simultaneously with the next meeting of the RPSC in order to facilitate the participation of donors as observers.

It was decided that the draft report will first be circulated to members for observations and formal approval before being finalised and submitted to the Chairman's signature.

CLOSING SESSION

The agenda having been exhausted, the Chairman thanked all participants for the quality of work done within such a short time and wished a safe journey back home to all participants.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

| Nom | Pays/organisme |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| BALEPA martin | AFRISTAT |
| EBONGUE Abel Nkougourou | AFRISTAT |
| Mariam DOUCOURE | AFRISTAT |
| | |
| DJERMA Honoré | BIT |
| | |
| SALIHA DOUMBIA | MALI |
| TOM MIACHI | NIGERIA |
| JATAU | NIGERIA |
| OJJA ANDIRA Alphonse | OUGANDA |
| OWEN MGEMEZULU | ZAMBIE |
| MOUTE à BIDIAS Camille | CAMEROUN |
| TEKAPSSO Pierre | CAMEROUN |
| NJIMBON Etienne | CAMEROUN |
| ELA ELA AMOS | CAMEROUN |
| | |